



The Benchmark in Health and Safety

## **CASE STUDY ONE – Understanding the true performance of workplace health and safety.**

A major logistics company and GSI founding member operating across Australia and New Zealand used a traditional approach to measure and monitor the organisations safety performance focusing heavily of lag indicators such as Lost Time Injury Frequency.



To ensure all employees maintained safety at front of mind the Executive team initiated a reward and recognition scheme that was measured by total number of lost time injury days free across its operating sites and distribution centres.

The competition and focus on lag indicators had made an impact increasing engagement across most of the business, with a typical range in performance there stood out one distribution centre which appeared to outperform all others when comparing Lost Time Injury frequency and days free since last Lost Time Injury.

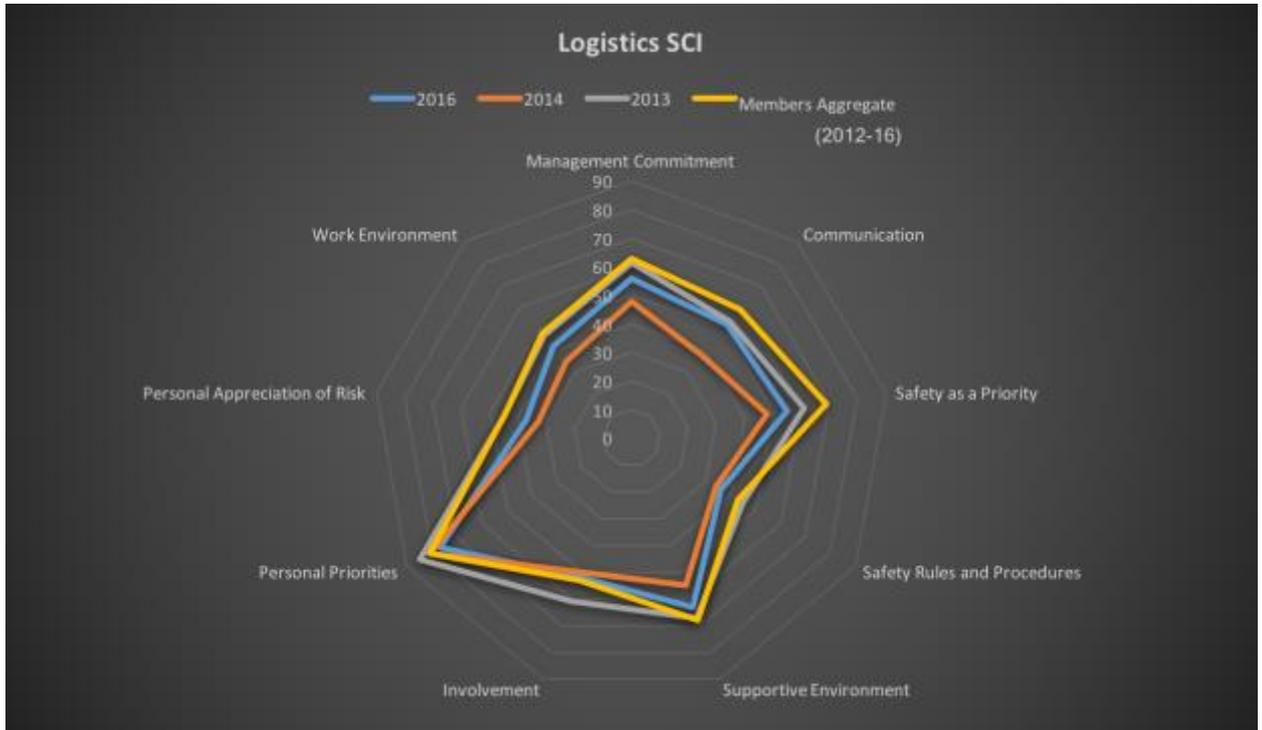
The “Distribution Centre” of the year was nominated based on this safety performance. For seven years in a row one distribution centre had won.

The site and the site management team where seen as the benchmark and often looked to as a model site to show customers, potential clients and new employees.

To maintain this level of focus and engagement on workplace safety the Logistics executive team engaged GSI to assess the organisations health and safety culture using the Safety Culture Index.



Successfully rolled out across a vertical sample of an employee base of some 7000 employees, the results depicted an interesting story.



The high performing sites with low lost time injury frequency did not have the highest level of safety culture as assessed by the employees. In fact, in one surprising case the opposite appeared to be so, with a low Safety Culture Index scored compared to a low lost time injury frequency.

The executive at first challenged the GSI scoring system and methodology as an award winning operating site surely must have a strong workplace health and safety culture. So to understand the executive team visited the site and met with management. In addition to meeting with management the executive did a site walk and ran a few small team discussions without the site management present. What they found was alarming!

The Executive learnt that the reason why the score was so low was due to a culture of fear, under reporting and filtering of information. The very data that went into



determining the Lag indicators and who was the best performing workplace health and safety leader.

This lesson created several important insights for the organisation –

- It is critical to get front line feedback to truly understand what is happening in workplace health and safety.
- A balanced approach to measuring performance that considers both the inputs and outputs (The culture and capability that delivered the result) is the most effective and true representation of performance.
- The importance of governance and the need to “Trust but verify” - (If you getting great results understand how and why, if you getting poor results understand how and why)

Post this event the Executive team has adopted GSI SCI on the groups balanced scorecard and measures both the inputs and the outputs of performance on an annual basis coupled with a direct engagement strategy to understand results and initiatives put in place to effect and deliver the level of performance.